

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

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Insert the following new section immediately below the title of the application and above the section entitled "BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION":

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a divisional of co-pending Application No. 09/864,194, filed on May 25, 2001, the entire contents of which are hereby incorporated by reference and for which priority is claimed under 35 U.S.C. § 120; and this application claims priority of Application No. 2000-155856 filed in Japan on May 26, 2000 under 35 U.S.C. § 119.

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Amend the paragraph commencing at line 1 as follows:

When the substantially half lower portion of the body is pressed into the thin region by the counterpunch, however, an excess amount of metal is forced to flow from the lower portion into the upper portion of the body, thereby enlarging the upper portion of the body and hence increasing the thickness thereof. If the thickness of the upper portion of the body is increased until it becomes greater than the thickness of the head including the ears, then the body becomes thicker than the head. With the body being thicker than the head, the elements tend to be held more closely together at their heads than at their bodies while traveling in the path between the pulleys, and are difficult to be kept in a linearly stacked state between the pulleys. As a result,

the belt which is traveling between the pulleys is liable to be twisted, and fails to transmit stable power in the continuously variable transmission. In addition, the endless rings in the recesses are likely to be forced into contact with the lower edges of the ~~hears~~ ears, damaging the elements and the endless rings themselves.

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Amend the paragraph commencing at line 3 as follows:

The ~~year~~ ear 7, the body 5, and the neck 6 joined therebetween jointly define a pair of recesses 11 between the ears 7 and the body 5 and on opposite sides of the neck 6. When the continuously variable transmission is assembled, the endless belts are inserted in the respective recesses 11. The body 5 has a pair of laterally spaced pulley contact surfaces (V-shaped surfaces) 12 on its opposite ends for contact with a pulley, not shown, of the continuously variable transmission. The body 5 has a thin region 13 in its substantially half lower portion whose thickness is progressively reduced toward a lower edge thereof.